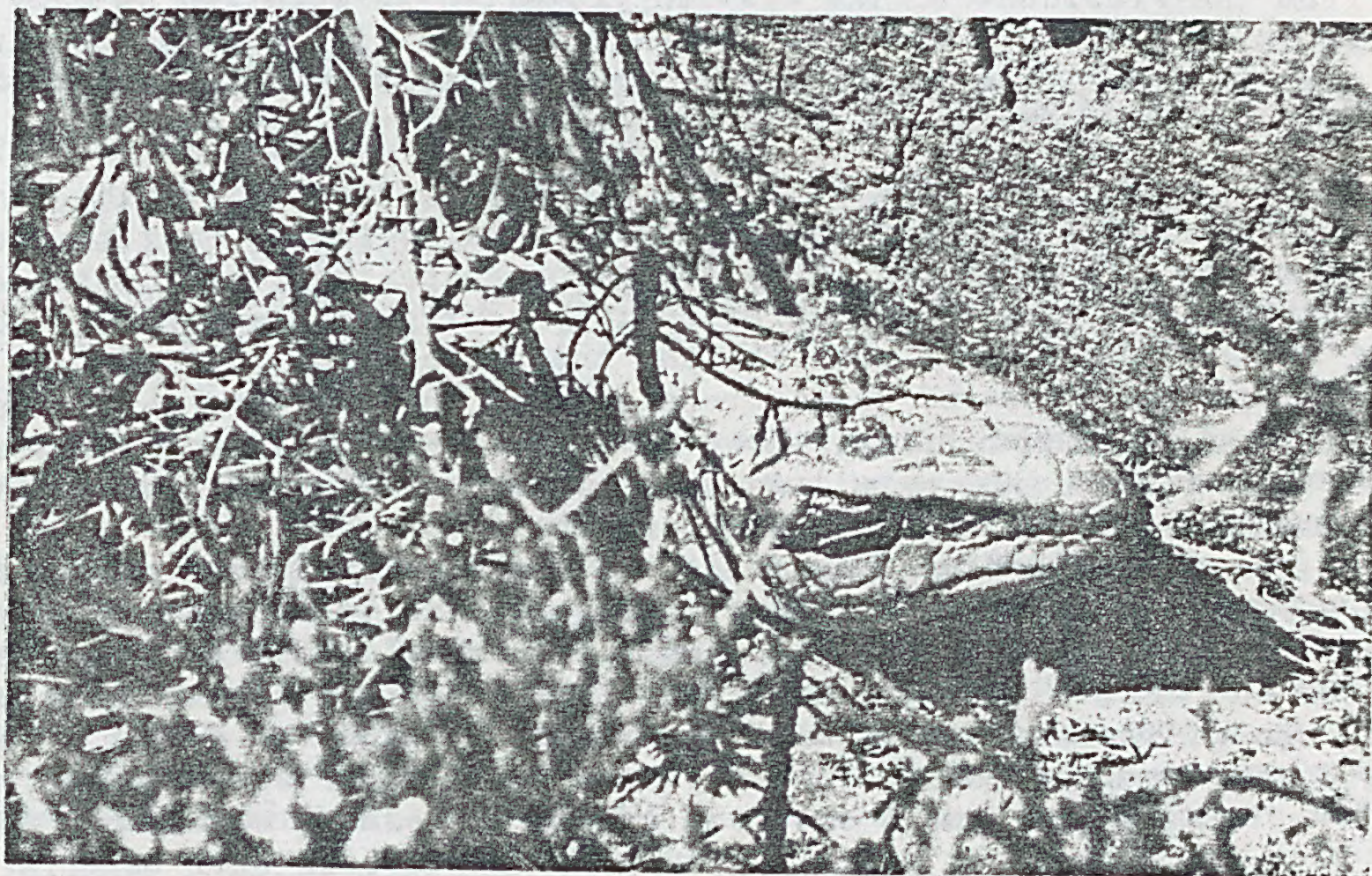


CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

December 1984 97

Holly Grevillea



A GARDEN VISITOR

A welcome visitor to the garden in the early spring seen here lurking under a Grevillea.

But what a shock to lift up a piece of the shrubbery to find the long scaly stripey body lurking there.

Club meetings: At the Castlemaine High School, 8 p.m.
second Friday of the month.

Club outings: usually on the second Saturday of the month
departing from outside the S.E.C. building, Mostyn St,
at 1.30 p.m.

Editorial

Here we are already, the end of the year is almost upon us and so much remains to be done. As usual I had hopes of being able to spend a little more time in the preparation of the Newsletter, but as always, there are so many other things which are also extremely pressing, if not more so.

Thank you to all the contributors who have kept the Newsletter going. What a relief it is to look in the file and find an article or two from members. In this Newsletter I have included a letter from the President of the Western Victorian Association as many of you will not otherwise have a chance to read it. I have also included an article on the National Parks Calendar as this may provide an idea for a Christmas gift, especially for someone overseas.

Once again the Field Nat. contribution to the Castlemaine State Festival was a much-appreciated one by all accounts, many thanks to those who participated and helped to organise the large number of visitors who turned up. Unfortunately your editor apparently got a little carried away when writing the article for the Festival brochure and conveyed the impression that the visitors were sure to see vast flocks of birds. However in spite of this disappointment I am sure that they were treated to a good display of Flora with a competent description into the bargain.

Now we are looking forward to 1985. February brings our Annual Meeting, so if there is anyone who would like to contribute by joining the committee, please don't be bashful about letting others know, after all we don't want the club to ossify through the lack of fresh blood and ideas from time to time. If you are unable to take a place on the committee, perhaps you could offer suggestions for the program. Do you know of any suitable speakers or of any places which the club might visit? Any such suggestions will be more than welcome.

November has brought the joy of watching our various Callistemons opening up their blossoms one after the other, with the various shades of pink and red, with a cream contribution from next door. These, together with certain Melaleucas, Eremophilas, and a couple of pink-flowering Eucalypts, have succeeded in attracting Silver-eyes and Thornbills to the garden while there have also been some young Spinebills coming regularly. This morning the garden seemed to be full of New Holland Honeyeaters as about 6 of them chased each other boisterously through the trees. Recently an Eremophila was visited by a strange bird which I was surprised to find appeared to be a Singing Honeyeater, which is a bird I had not seen in this district before. However a friend tells me that he has them nesting

regularly on his property near Chewton. Perhaps other members might like to comment on any sightings.

Friday the 14th is our breakup night. It is the night we have a special supper, perhaps more time for a chat after viewing some members slides. So if you have a few slides you have taken please bring them along, don't leave it all to the few. If you are not a photographer, be especially alert for articles or specimens of interest. Our specimen table has been a trifle bare of late.

Now it only remains to wish everyone all the very best for the coming season. May your Christmas be a happy one and may the holiday period bring you many sightings or exciting discoveries which you can return and share with the rest of us in 1985.

The Month at Campbells Creek

by Terry Collins

(Written in early November - Ed.)

Summer is nearly upon us with the result that there is very little in our "Natural Paddock". Plenty of Billy Buttons, very few Milkmaids, some Trigger Plants and the Blue Flax Plant. Notable absence this year was the Chocolate Lilies; usually they are numerous but only solitary plants occurred.

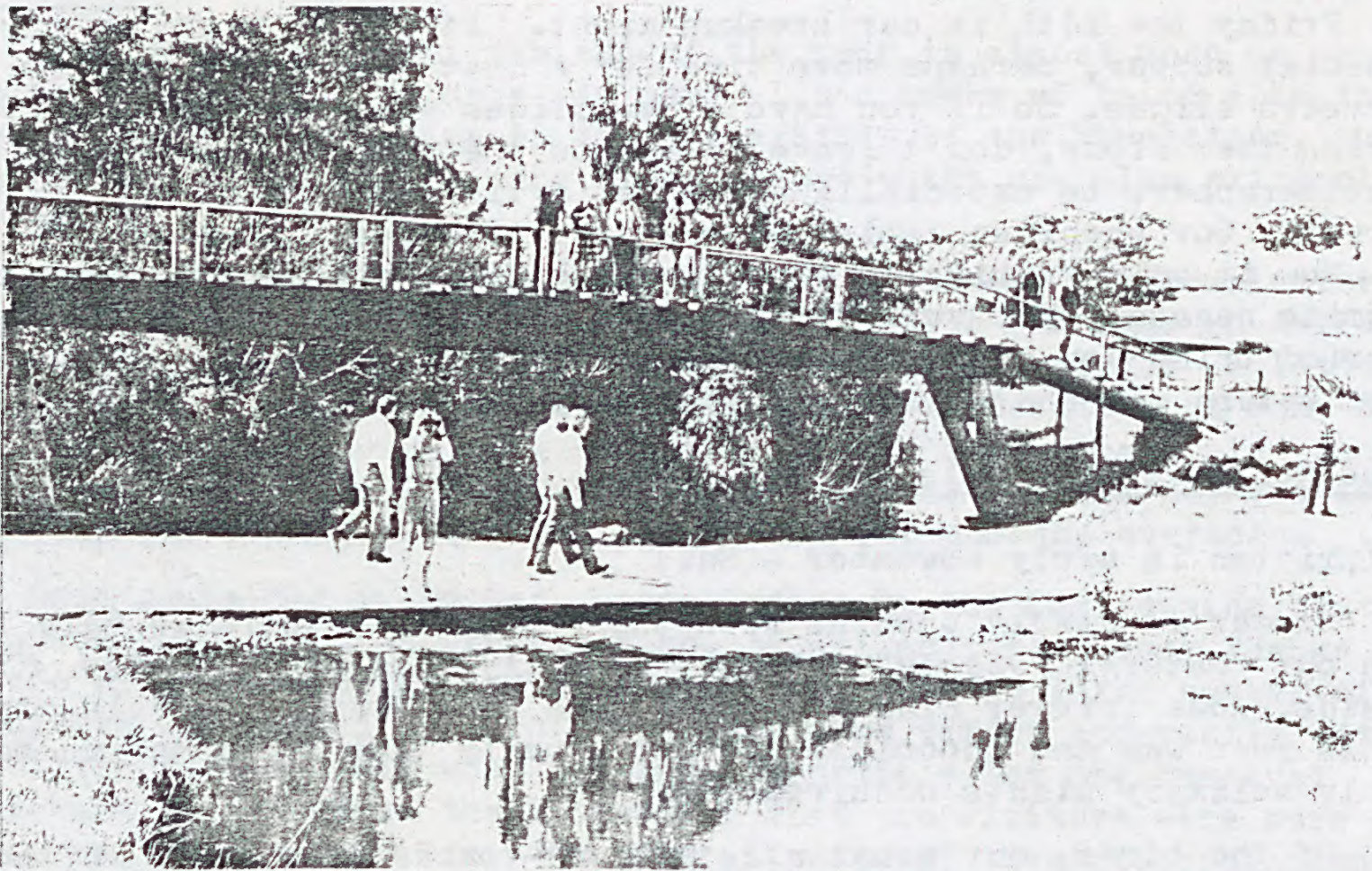
Of the birds, our usual all-the-year-rounds seem to be in the same numbers but it is puzzling that the Honeyeaters which visit here in these months have not arrived. Only a couple of Yellow-faced and the single Spinebill. Plenty of Blue Wrens and Yellow Thornbills; the latter have used the same nest for three hatchings. Firstly in August, secondly early October, and now November. Would it be the same pair or is it a different family each time. Perhaps one of our experts could put forward an answer. The Bronze-winged Pigeons are building again in a small Cypress down the drive, so hope they have better luck than last year when a cat came along one night.

We have a great variety of ants on the block which we treat as equal occupants, even to protecting some of their nests. Some are minute, others up to one inch long such as the friendly sugar ants and some black ones about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long. These black ones have had their nest on a path ever since we arrived. Very cautious, and inoffensive. During Summer we drop a tit-bit for them at the nest site and when things are quiet they cart it away. However I came upon a new nest the other day and by the size of the excavation I would have noticed it had it been there long. These are the villains they are a full inch long with dull black body except the abdomen which is a shiny jet black, but are they fierce? They attack in force if you get close enough. Where they came from is a mystery.

Happy times to All

Terry C. of Campbells C.

The Excursion to the Rise and Shine Mine, Clydesdale. Sep 15.



Bridge and Ford on the Jim Crow Creek

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Trevor Pescott
President, Western Victorian Field Naturalists
Clubs Association

In many ways, it is hard to realise that twelve months have passed since our last Annual General Meeting, on that extraordinarily wet weekend at Bacchus Marsh.

Since then we have met at Warrnambool, Wood Wood and tonight at Halls Gap, taking advantage of visiting different environments and enjoying the hospitality of three host clubs.

A number of issues have been raised and discussed at the meetings, the most significant to the operation of the Association being the question of incorporation.

(Continued page 7



Riverside Park, Franklinton.
Birdwatchers in action.

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(See letter next page)

Victorian National Parks Association

OBJECTS

TO STRIVE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATIONAL PARKS • TO FOSTER PUBLIC INTEREST IN NATIONAL PARKS • TO FORM A LINK BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND THE NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE • TO WORK FOR FURTHER RESERVATIONS OF NATIONAL PARKS • TO PROMOTE THE EDUCATION OF THE COMMUNITY IN MATTERS RELATING TO THE CONSERVATION OF INDIGENOUS FAUNA AND FLORA AND OF OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES • TO CO-OPERATE WITH OTHERS HAVING SIMILAR OBJECTS.

1st October 1984

To the Secretary as addressed,

Dear Friend,

We now have stocks of our 1985 Victoria's National Parks Calendar, Retail Price \$6.95. This Calendar contains 13 superb colour photographs taken in Victoria's National Parks.

Would you like to sell the calendar to raise funds for your group? Calendars can be purchased direct from the V.N.P.A for \$4.20 each, providing a profit margin of 40%. However, you are welcome to discount the recommended retail price to your members.

If you are in the metropolitan area and are able to call and pick them up, it would certainly be a help to us, but if not we will send them by post or carrier most speedily.

An order form and a business reply envelope are supplied and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

T. Sfara.

Teresa Sfara
Calendar Sales

The decision not to incorporate came, at least in part, from the clarification of the nature of the campouts. The Association accepts the invitation of a member club to hold the meeting in it's area, but does not organise the campout as such - that's the host clubs responsibility.

The Association, in conducting the General Meetings, is a forum through which the clubs can initiate discussion on matters important to us all, and see action taken where necessary.

I hope that more clubs will take advantage of the opportunity that exists to seek advice and support from their kindred organisations.

It is in this way that attention has been focused during the last twelve months on the lack of legislation to declare L.C.C. recommendations on the problems associated with faunal population imbalances in national parks, and on the need to establish a natural history archive.

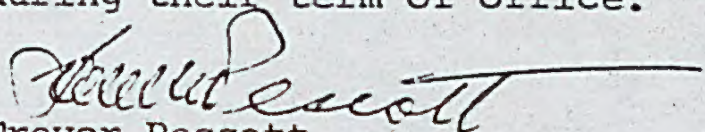
The campouts continue to encourage eleven or twelve clubs to send delegates, and there is always excellent support given to the Association by those who attend either as club representatives or visitors.

I want to express to the members of the three host clubs - Warrnambool, Mid-Murray and Stawell - special thanks for the attention paid to detail in planning and running the weekends, and for the warm welcome extended to us on each occasion.

It was my intention to thank individually those who have given their support to the Association over the past year - but I came to realise that this was every person who had shared the excursions or meetings at each campout.

So I will say just one special "thank you", and that from the members of all the clubs in the Association to Gwenyth - while her efficiency as Secretary/Treasurer has been appreciate, it is the warmth and friendship she generates that has been particularly important to the success of the Association over the last two years.

Finally, to Bob and Win, may I wish them well as President and Secretary during their term of office.



Trevor Pescott,
13th October, 1984.

CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. AGENDA

Friday 14 December. Members and Visitors night. This is the final meeting for 1984. Bring a plate if possible. And try to bring a specimen or some exhibit. Do you have some slides or photos to show?

Thursday 24 January. Business meeting at 7.30 p.m. Note that we do not have a general meeting in January.

Friday 8th February. Annual meeting. Program to be arranged.

Saturday 9th February. Werona/Eganstown. Mainly birds, so bring your binoculars and birdbooks.

Saturday 9th March. Local Geology. An excursion around the district to see local rock formations. S.E.C. at 1.30. Leader is E. Ferlins.

Sat/Sun 20-21 April. Western Victoria F.N.C. Association Campout at Princetown/Pt Campbell. Love-in, with evening excursion to Otway Glowworms.

August. Western Victoria F.N.C.A. campout at Bendigo. Date to be announced.

Fri/Sat/Sun 13-15 October. W.V.F.N.C.A. Campout at Colac.

October. All day excursion to the Whipstick forest, Bendigo. Date to be announced.

Program to be arranged for 1985 include Mr Phil Day (Ballarat C.A.B.) - Geology, and Mr Hope. Also telling us about Western Australia. Others are being arranged.

Membership fees for 1984 are:-

- \$4 Single membership
- \$6 Family membership
- \$10 Supporting membership
- \$2 Pensioner / student

Subscriptions paid by new members during November/December will cover 1984/1985.